

INTERVIEW SUMMARY

On February 2, 2005, the undersigned called the Examiner. The following is an Interview Summary Record.

The Applicant indicated that the Applicant wished to amend claim 5 to remove "audio accelerator" from the claim in response to the Examiner's objection to the form set forth in the office action at page 3, paragraph 7. It was indicated that it was not believed that this amendment would require a new search. Therefore, it was suggested that the amendment should be allowed, even on final rejection. The Examiner suggested that the Applicant go ahead and respond and the Examiner would decide whether to enter the amendment and also would considered whether the finality was appropriate.

It is respectfully submitted that the finality is not appropriate because in the last response, the only claim that was amended was claim 1. Claim 1 is now rejected only under Section 112 and the basis for that rejection was directed to features that were in the claim prior to the amendment. In other words, the amendment did not raise any new issue with respect to Section 112. Thus, the Applicants' amendment did not necessitate the new grounds of rejection. The only new grounds of prior art rejection were on the claims after claim 1 and none of those claims were amended.

Either because it is an appropriate amendment after final or because the finality was inappropriate, the amendment to claim 5 should be permitted.

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REMARKS

Reconsideration of the Section 112 rejection of claim 1, set forth in paragraph 5 of the office action, is respectfully requested. The gist of the objection seems to be that the claim is read to involve mixing of digital signals. This is based on the language "a pair of analog to digital converters coupled to the third stereo channel pair, one of said mixers also coupled to said pair of analog to digital converters." However, it is respectfully submitted that the rejection assumes a direction of signal flow which does not exist in the claim language.

Referring, for example, to Figure 2, it can be seen that an analog to digital converter pair 60 is coupled to the mixer 62, but note that the direction of signal flow is from the mixer to the analog to digital converter 60. Thus, no digital signals are being mixed. The claim simply says "coupled," but does not specify the signal flow direction.

Therefore, it is respectfully submitted that the wording of claim 1 does not suffer from the objection noted and that reconsideration would be appropriate.

With respect to the objection contained in paragraph 7 of the office action, claim 5 has been amended to remove the audio accelerator from the claims. As discussed above in the Examiner interview summary, it is believed that this amendment should be permitted on various grounds and that the amendment overcomes the objection.

Claim 5 was rejected as unpatentable over the Intel Corporation material in view of Fields. However, the office action concedes that "Intel's Figure 1 does not specifically disclose a second stereo channel pair in corresponding D/A converts and analog mixer."

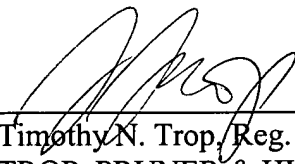
To overcome this deficiency, the reference to Fields is applied. However, Fields does not really do anything set forth in the claim. For example, Fields does have two mixers and separate outputs, but Fields teaches away from the claimed invention. It does not have any digital to analog converters. And while it has two mixers, each mixer mixes both the input pairs A and B. In other words, the mixer 110 is coupled to mix the pairs A and B and the mixer 112 is coupled to mix a duplicate of the pair A and B.

Claim 5 requires each of said mixers to be coupled to one of said first and second pairs of digital to analog converters and no such thing is taught in either cited reference or their combination.

Specifically, the claim has been amended to make it clear that the connection is to "only" one of said first and second pairs of digital to analog converters, whereas in Fields, each mixer is connected to both pairs.

Respectfully submitted,

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